Memorial

of

Mrs. Mary R. Waltzer

MEMORIAL OF MRS. MARY R. WALKER

The discourse preached at Forest Grove, Oregon, at the funeral of Mrs. Mary Richardson Walker, Dec. 7, 1897, by Rev. M. Eells, D. D.

JUDGE 5:7. I arose a Mother in Israel.

It is not necessary at this time to enlarge upon the connection, only to say that Deborah was a prophetess and judge in Israel, and with the assistance of Barak delivered Israel from Jabin, king of Canaan, the captain of whose host was Sisera. After the victory she sang a song, and from it these words are taken.

But there is a spiritual Israel, and there are spiritual mothers in it, and these are as much greater in God's sight than the temporal judges, as heaven is higher than earth.

The pioneers of Oregon have held an honored place in this state for many years, and their annual re-unions have been times when their deeds and lives have been told to the later comers with great eloquence.

But there is one item, said the Secretary of the Oregon Pioneer Association to me apout five years ago, which seemed to him to have been omitted almost entirely; and that is the patience and heroism of our mothers. If you look over the transactions of that body to that time you will find this to be true. Each of the early emigrations from 1841 on had been remembered, there had been addresses about early steamboating, railroading, Indian wars, the sons of the pioneers and so on, but none about the pioneer mothers. Since that there has been one address which partially covered this point.

If you will look further through those valuable transactions you will also find that there have been no addresses about the early missionaries who came previous to the emigration of 1841, which was the first regular one that came for settlement, says Hon. H. H. Gilfry, reading clerk of the United States senate, himself a graduate of that honored institution which had its origin among the missionaries to the Indians, the Willamette University, in his address on Oregon at

the Centennial in Philadelphia in 1876; says this man "Yet these missionaries cannot be truly called the pioneers of settlement, as they did not go west to attack the forest and cultivate the soil for the result of husbandry, but their going opened the way and attracted the pioneers to follow." Perhaps it is true that they "cannot be truly called the pioneers of settlement," perhaps it is not true, but if it is, they were more, *they prepared the way for the pioneers; they were the pioneers of the pioneers.*

Today however we will reverse the order. Instead of omitting the mothers and the missionaries we come to honor the memory of one who belonged to both, a mother who helped to prepare the way for the pioneers, a mother in Israel.

Mrs. Mary Richardson Walker was born at Baldwin, Maine, April 1, 1811. She was the daughter of Joseph and Charlotte T. Richardson. Two of her great grandfathers were Revolutionary soldiers, one D. Thompson falling at Lexington. The oldest child died when Mary was about three months old and she was left the oldest of ten children. Her mother was probably the more forcible in character of the two parents and was of an intensely religious nature and Mary inherited these qualities from her. Her father was a man of sterling worth and had an original and practical turn of mind which the daughter inherited. Both had a good education so that they taught school, and after this daughter had received a good education at the Maine Wesleyan Seminary at Reedfield, Maine, which she finished when about twenty years old, she, likewise, taught school until about the time of her marriage. She made a profession of religion at the age of twenty, and six years later offered herself to the American Board as their missionary and was accepted.

When Miss Richardson became a Christian it was no half hearted work with her. Those days had the same human nature and the same Christian nature that these have. There were those with whom she was acquainted in her early years who turned away from Christ; those who became Christians but were half hearted ones, who even looked down on missionary work and were ready to say as one did on this coast some years ago, "Five dollars for home missions but not a cent for foreign missions." And there were those whose hearts had been warmed in their love for Christ by the revivals which went through New England in the days of Dr. Nettleton and Dr. Edwards and others like them, by the missionary spirit of Samuel J. Mills and Judson, and the Haystack monument at Williams

College where the American Board of Commissioners was prayed into existence until they were not half hearted but whole souled Christians.

Mrs. Walker belonged to the latter class and when I look back at her willingness to change from one mission to another I am forcibly reminded of Paul's words when he first became a Christian, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" She was willing to go where God wanted her and when the way opened in one place was willing to go and yet was not so set in her determination to go there but what she could change if God's finger pointed in another direction. So at first she was appointed as a single lady missionary to Siam.

Before, however, it was time for her to go, she had become acquainted with Mr. Walker and they were married, a union which continued for more than forty years in this world, until her husband's death November 21, 1877, and an eternal affection in the glorious heaven where they are now reunited.

It seemed best, however, to the board that if the two should go together, the greater demand for a man and his wife was among the Zulus of South Africa; so she was asked if she were willing to change her destination and she said yes.

God, however. had other plans for them and when He saw that she was willing to go anywhere He wished to have them, He turned over as it were, His little finger and showed them where was to be their life work. He allowed two Zulu chiefs, Dingaan and Moselektze to go to war and He allowed them to continue the war long enough to keep Mr. and Mrs. Walker in Maine until a call should come from Oregon. And when, in the latter part of 1837, Mr. W. H. Gray came with a message from Dr. Marcus Whitman, Rev. H. H. Spalding and their wives who had come as the first missionaries of the American Board to Oregon the year before and from the Indians of the same region saying, "Come over the Rocky Mountains and help us," the Board asked her if she was willing again to change. Being willing to be guided by the providence of God as obediently as the ship is by its rudder, they said, "Here we are, send us." So their destination was again changed as well as that of the two who were associated with them for ten years among the Spokane Indians, my father and mother, who like them had been appointed to Zulu land but had been detained by the same war. Thus we see how strangely God works. The wicked actions of two Zulu chiefs in Africa were overruled so as to immensely affect the Educational and Christian interests of Oregon and Washington.

So on the fifth day of March, 1838, both couple were married, the one in Maine, the other in Massachusetts, and then began the long bridal tour of about 3500 miles. What a journey it was! Pioneers now speak of the great hardships they endured when they came in ox wagons. But when Mrs. Walker came there were no wagons of any kind, nor for five years afterward. It was to be on horseback and only two women, Mrs. Whitman and Mrs. Spalding had ever made the trip even in that way.

On March 17, the two couples met for the first time, in New York, and there on the next day, the Sabbath, they received their instructions as missionaries in Dr. Gardiner Spring's church from Rev. David Green, a Secretary of the American Board; the next day they were joined by Rev. A. B. Smith and wife from Vermont and Massachusetts, with whom Mr. and Mrs. Walker tented all the way across the plains, and on Tuesday, they left, being commended in prayer by Dr. Armstrong, another Secretary of the Board, to God as their only Preserver and Protector, who prayed that their lives and health might be spared, and that they might be abundantly blessed among the heathen, and finally receive the welcome plaudit of their Divine Master, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord." That prayer has truly been answered.

I have not time, nor is this the proper place to describe this journey which occupied 129 days on horseback, from Missouri, 177 days from their homes, until they reached Dr. Whitman's station in the Walla Walla valley August 29, 1838.

Let me however relate three incidents. The first to show their constancy to principle, the second to show their trials, the third to show God's care,

They left Chambersburg, in Pennsylvania, on an extra stage on Thursday, the regular one being full, with the promise of being in Pittsburgh Saturday afternoon. There were the three couples, and one other man and wife. Saturday night found them thirty miles from Pittsburgh. Shall they go on? If they do they will be taken care of free. If they stay, it will cost them five dollars a couple. The driver says he will do as the party decides. The other man wanted to go on, though he and his wife professed to be Christians, and were going west to do good. The missionaries vote to stay, and in order to satisfy the other couple, offer to pay his hotel bills and did do so. As they were the majority they stayed On Monday however, they overtook the regular stage, which had broken down,

and arrived at Pittsburgh first. *Here we see their constancy to principle.*

When they reached the North Fork of the Platte it was raining. The river was high. The snows on the Rocky mountains were in sight, and were melting. The men were busy up to their waists in the cold water swimming their animals across, and so could not assist their wives. The river was rising and flooding the bottom and running into their tents from beneath. It is water above, and water beneath, and water all around. Mrs. Walker went into her tent, piled up the things as best she could, to keep them out of the water, sat on top of them. You all know how pleasant and cheerful she generally was even down to old age, She was also then young, strong and vigorous. But this was too much for her. She was crying. Why? She was thinking of her father's farm, and of her father's swine, and how much more comfotable they were, than she was. *This is an illustration of their trials.*

They reached the American Rendezvous in the Rocky mountains. Hitherto they had travelled with the American Fur Company who traded for furs with Indians on the East Side of the Rocky mountains, while the Hudson's Bay Company had the field on this side. Without some such protection the journey could not be made. Usually the two companies met somewhere in the Rocky mountains, bought furs of the Indians, and trappers and then each returned to their own side. But that year the American Fur Company was angry with the Hudson's Bay Company, and instead of going to the usual place, hid away and went a hundred or a hundred and fifty miles to the north. Mr. Gray had told the Hudson's Bay Company that he expected to bring a party out that year aud as he had been kind to their agent, F. Ermatinger, they expected to meet the missionaries at the Rendezvous and conduct them the rest of the way. But when their officers reached the usual rendezvous there was no one there or any trace of them. Where were they? What were the missionaries' thoughts? They can go back. Possibly they could go to California with a party of trappers who were going there, and then work their way up to Oregon. This they had about decided to try to do. But some one who knew where the American Fur Company had gone, went to the old place of rendezvous, and wrote with charcoal go to such a place and you will find plenty whiskey, trade and white women.

Those words "white women" told them about the missionaries for there were no others in the country and they went there, arriving

a few days before the whole camp was about to break up. They also brought the welcome intelligence that Dr. Whitman and Mr. Spalding had sent fresh horses and provisions to Fort Hall for them. This, at first, almost overcame them. They felt that the God of missions had forseen their wants and seasonably supplied them beyond their expectations. *This is an illustration of God's care over them.*

They arrived at Dr. Whitman's August 29, 1838, and spent the winter there. There fifty nine years ago today her first born child was given her, Cyrus H., the oldest American white boy born on the Pacific coast. Then again they started on the 5th day of March, just one year from the day each couple were married, and went one hundred and fifty miles further north to Tshimakain, the place selected among the Spokanes for their life work. But as there was no suitable place for the ladies and the one child, these were invited to spend the time at Fort Colville until their husbands could prepare some kind of homes for them. These were finished so that they could live in them about the last of April, and then, nearly fourteen months from the time they were married they were ready to receive their bridal calls.

They were welcomed by the country, by the Indians, by the few whites here, but what a different welcome it was from what there is now. There were a few settlements in the country: A Hudson's Bay Company's fort at Vancouver, Walla Walla, Colville, Hall, Boise, Nisqually, Umpqua and Okanagon, a mission station at Walla Walla, Lapwai, The Dalles and near Salem and a very small settlement at Astoria, thirteen settlements between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific, the British line and California which was then a part of Mexico Besides those connected with the Hudson's Bay Company, there were as near as can be ascertained, fifty-one Americans in the same region to welcome them, of whom thirty were connected either with the Methodist missions or those of the American Board. Of these fourteen were females, all of whom were connected with the missions, ten of them having come around Cape Horn, two across the continent and two infants who had been born here. These were all who there were in the country to welcome Mrs. Walker. Not one American white woman who had come here as a regular settler. Their nearest white neighbors for nine years were at Fort Colville, seventy miles away and the next at Lapwai, 120 miles distant. Surely they were the pioneers of the pioneers.

What were their homes where they were ready to receive callers?

Log pens, fourteen feet square on the outside, less than twelve inside, of logs about a foot in diameter, with the earth for a floor and pine boughs for a roof. As these did not shelter, they placed earth on top, and for a carpet the ladies brought in pine boughs, and when they became dry they took them out and brought in new ones.

However, such a woman did not live in such a house always, for when Lieutenant R. E. Johnson, and Mr. Maxwell of Commodore Wilkes' expedition visited the place in 1841, two years later, finding the men absent at a meeting of the mission, he says he was received by the ladies with great hospitality, and though living in rough log huts, everything about them was scrupulously clean, and that they both seemed to be happy, cheerful and contented with their situation.

For a table they brought a few boards seventy miles, drove stakes into the ground floor and had an immovable table. In course of years they did get more lumber, enough to make a floor, but all was sawed out by hand. For window glass they had, at first, cotton cloth. In the winter that let in too much cold, so they used undressed deer skin oiled, and after some years obtained some glass from Massachusetts, but never during their whole stay there to 1848 did they have a cook stove.

And what about their food? They had vegetable, swild berries and some flour. At Dr. Whitman's during the first winter their flour was brought either from Vancouver or Fort Colville over 200 miles either way, where were the only two flour mills in the country. and it was worth twenty-four dollars a barrel. So they were allowed a small baking once a week which by economy lasted two or three days and then they ate boiled wheat and corn. At Tshimakain they were more highly favored as their flour mill was at Colville only seventy miles distant but on account of frost, which some years ago, came every month, they could only have corn and the more tender vegetables about once in three years. Did they have beef? Yes, horse flesh, six or eight horses having been killed for this purpose during their first winter at Dr. Whitman's.

And that food, they said, was so much better than what they had had while crossing the plains when it was buffalo, morning, noon and night, week after week, buffalo, buffalo, buffalo, until some of them could not eat it, as it made them sick. At Tshimakain they salted down about one horse a year for a number of years. There were no cattle in the country? Yes, a few, but, except a few owned by the mission, the Hudson's Bay Company owned all, and neither

love nnr money could buy one. Yes, they did have one piece of beef in 1838. An old cow twenty years old, the mother of all the cattle then in that region, which had not a tooth in her head, was killed at the Hudson's Bay fort, Walla Walla, as she was no longer useful to keep alive, and a liberal piece was sent to the missionaries; but it was many years before they had beef for regular food.

For dishes on which to eat their food they had at first the tin ones they used while crossing the continent, and as there were hardly any earthen ones in the country they probably had to wait until some could be ordered from England and come by way of Cape Horn and the Sandwich Islands. White cotton cloth, ribbons, laces and many little things which are convenient for ladies were just as scarce, for there had been no ladies here to call for them.

Neighbors! Yes, the Indians, of whom Mr. Walker wrote in 1843, who practiced their incantations which amounted to devil worship, and whose camp during these ceremonies had more the appearance of being the habitation of demons than of rational beings, and of whom, after he had been among them for five years, he said "I have never found one who in the strict sense of the word could be called honest or truthful."

But if they had so many hardships could they not at least hear from home to cheer them in their lonesomeness? Yes, once in six months, in later years some times once in twelve, every newspaper and letter being at least six months old and the rest older. One letter, written at Tshimakain on Thanksgiving says: Your letter dated September, 1841, I received July, 1843, twenty one months on the way.

Supposing too she should be left a widow there by some accident. Mr. Walker went to Lapwai at one time, in returning the Palouse river was swollen by rain and he was detained five days longer than the appointed time. Was it strange that the wife was anxious? When he returned she found that in crossing that swift Palouse, swollen by rain, he and the Indian had been obliged to make a raft, that they were nearly across when the Indian jumped ashore expecting to catch the raft but, by mistake, pushed it out into the stream and the Indians sadly watched their teacher expecting to see him helplessly drowned. A kind Providence only saved him. Just before the raft reached the dangerous place it grounded, and he was saved.

Think again of the dangers to them during the Cayuse war. As soon as they heard of the massacre of Dr. Whitman they heard also the rumor that a party of Cayuses had been sent to their station to

kill them. Next came a false report that a party of Spokanes then in the Willamette valley had been killed by the whites in retaliation for the Whitman massacre. The Cayuses spread this report so as to induce the Spokanes to join them. The Colville Indians to the north of them believed it, and the Fort there was under guard night and day for two weeks. The men knew that if any persons should be killed, they would be the first. Was it strange that with trembling hands they wrote the Chief Factor of Fort Colville asking him that in case they should meet a violent death, he would kindly take charge of the widows and fatherless, if they should be spared, put them on board a Hudson's Bay Company boat and send them to the Sandwich Islands, to the care of the American Board. What were the mental trials of these mothers as they thought that they might be left widows, and their children fatherless, thousands of miles from home, or perhaps taken captive by the Indians as some at Walla Walla had been, or killed as Mrs. Whitman had been.

I well remember hearing Mr. Walker tell at our Association in Olympia in 1874, of the feelings he had on Sabbath evening after Dr. Whitman had been killed. The Walker and Eells families had been removed to Fort Colville and he, Mr. Eells and one boy had returned to Tshimakain to look after the property. Near night, when they were alone, they heard a war whoop in the woods, and it came nearer and nearer. There was nothing to do but watch and wait. It proved to be friendly Spokane Indians, who fearing that some Cayuses had come to kill them, had run their horses about twenty miles, either to defend their teachers or to avenge their death; but what if it had been the Cayuses, what a situation Mrs. Walker would have been in!

When we look back over these times, and compare them with the flour and beef and food, and lumber, and houses, and modes of travel, and mails and telegraphic communication and securities of the present day, what a contrast Mother Walker saw before her death. No living person who has crossed the continent has seen such changes on the Pacific coast. None has seen the population subject to the United States change from fifty-one to three millions, as there are in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, California, Arizona, New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, Alaska and parts of Montana and Wyoming today, a change of nearly sixty thousand fold.

Is it strange also that I find the following sentence under the heading, Mary Richardson Walker, in the history of the Willamette Valley. "To the people of today it must seem wonderful, and alto-

gether inexplicable, how human beings, as tenderly nurtured as the Walker and Eells families were, could live at all amid such surroundings and the wonder increases when it is learned that ten years did not serve to dampen the ardor of these pious missionary people." It would seem inexplicable were it not for a short sentence or two. "A mother in Israel." And how it adds to that sentence to have the word Israel added to it, signifying love and work for Christ. The ten years passed and on account of the Whitman massacre they were obliged to come to this valley. Had her sacrifice and that of the rest been of any avail? The Indians to the north of them who believed the lying reports were kept out of Fort Colville by bars and bolts, by muskets and cannon. Those to the south of them had massacred Dr. Whitman and others. But these Spokanes said they would believe their teachers first who told them that the reported death of many of their number in the Willamette valley was but a false rumor. They advised and guarded their teachers for three months after the massacre until the volunteers had driven the Cayuses to the border of their country, when all thought it best for the families to go to Fort Colville for safety They ran their horses twenty miles when they thought the Cayuses had secretly slipped through to kill the men who were left, either to protect them or avenge their death. They told the Cayuses that they must not come into their country; and when the latter said, "We will not do as you say," these Spokanes prepared to fight them. They assisted our troops during the war and when at last the mission families decided that it was best for them to leave, they pleaded that they would not go, saying they would protect them, would take them to their root grounds if necessary and even showed such strong opposition that the missionaries felt that the only danger was that the Indians would not allow them to leave, and when they did go two of them accompanied the missionaries a hundred miles and as they said goodbye said, "our hearts weep to see you go but we acquiesce, sorrowing most of all that they should see these faces no more."

Nor was this all. Year after year some of them came to Oregon City for work and always begged for their teachers to return or, if they could not go, for other teachers to be given them. When once the Indian agent, Dr. Dart, promised to go to their country and to take Mr. Walker with them how their hearts rejoiced. They went ahead with the joyful news, took wheat seventy miles to have it ground and made all needed preparation. And when they waited

and these two persons did not come, because after starting Dr. Dart had been called to Southern Oregon, how disappointed they were.

Were there any spiritual results? Not one of these Indians in 1848 was thought to be fit to be received into the church, but although not members of the visible church time showed that some of them were of the invisible one. An Indian agent and officer of the army, Major Lugenbeel, said that they were the best Indians he had ever seen, a returned miner in 1856 said "they are better Christians than we are",and Sabbath after Sabbath to this time some of them have gathered together to worship God.

During the first two years of the mission one, William Three Mountain, then sixteen years old, was a member of Mr. Walker's family, when suddenly he left for some reason unaccountable at first but it was afterwards learned that he was learning too fast, was learning more than the chief about the Bible so the chief determined that he must leave. But he was not a Christian then nor was he when the mission was broken up. His own account of his conversion as given to Dr. Eells is as follows: "I understood the teaching of Mr. Walker and yourself but I did not regard it. Subsequently my father died. I heard his dying counsel but did not regard it Two years thereafter I came to a stand. I turned about, I became another person." This was in 1864, twenty-five years after he had entered Mr. Walker's family, sixteen years after the breaking up of the mission and ten years before any other religious teachers went among them. And he became an acknowledged leader among them, the head of his colony, until his death in 1883. So the seed sown has grown in the hearts of those dark Indians and been scattered by them among others and given to their children and children's children, until gathered by other teachers since 1874, about a hundred and thirty of them are members of the visible church and this after many more had joined and been sifted out. Did it pay to go there and suffer as a mother in Israel?

Here they were in the Willamette valley in 1848, and it was a great step in advance of what it was where they had been. Here was a provisional government, although the United States had not assumed jurisdiction over Oregon, here was a population of something less than ten thousand, here was Portland with one store, one wharf and a few log houses, and Oregon City, the metropolis of the whole of the United States west of the Rocky mountains; the orphan asylum was here at Forest Grove where Pacific University now is; there were two Congregational churches, and three Congregational

ministers besides the missionaries from Tshimakain, in the valley' and here came Father and Mother Walker, with six children, between six months and ten years of age, to support but without any property of their own, as they had never had any salary while in the mission, only having their expenses paid, and here two months later, came the report of the discovery of the gold mines in California, when prices went up very high, and no wonder there were hard times for the family, but the same faith and the same God who had carried them through six troubles, carried them through the seventh. Two years at Oregon City, and forty-eight here. Here she and Mr. Walker helped in the early history of this church, she having her Bible class, and there are many now in this region who were members of it, who remember her teachings then with gratitude, and the way she pointed them to Christ.

But of this latter I will leave another to speak, only saying that once during these forty-nine years has Mother Walker been back east of the Cascades,—once in 1888 I had the privilege of accompanying her to Walla Walla where she had spent her first winter in Oregon, so that she might be present at, and assist in celebrating that jubilee at Whitman College, the fiftieth anniversary of her coming to this coast. And once she returned to Maine.

Now they are all gone, all of that band of missionaries who were under the American Board. Dr. and Mrs. Whitman in 1847, the former at the age of forty-five and the latter at thirty-nine, Mrs Spalding in 1851, at the age of forty-four, Mrs. Smith in 1855, aged forty-one, Father Spalding in 1874, aged seventy; Father Walker in 1877, aged seventy-two; Mrs. Eells in 1878, aged seventy-three; Mrs. Gray in 1881, aged seventy one; Mr. Smith in 1886, aged seventy-six; Mr. Gray in 1889, aged seventy-nine; Dr. Eells in 1893, aged eighty-three; and Grandma Walker in 1897, aged eighty-six years, eight months and four days, she living the longest on this coast and being the oldest at the time of death. The average ages of the whole band of twelve is sixty-five years and five months—longer than the average age of most who stay at home. Surely those who lose their lives for Christ's sake and the Gospel, shall find them, even in this life, besides what they found in spiritual results. They have come down, most of them, like a shock of corn fully ripe, or as the Bible puts it, in its season: nothing left but to easily drop off and be "carried by the angels to a land of rest." All that band up there now, not one of them sorry that they came here for Christ's sake to suffer for him.

And now as Elisha stood when Elijah was taken up to Heaven so we stand looking up, and saying to such mothers in Israel, Let a double portion of thy spirit fall on us—And may their mantle rest on each one of us.

HATCHET PRINTERY